



“Who You are, Negre?”: Gaze and Voice in Madness in Derek Walcott’s *Dream on Monkey Mountain*

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ESSAYS



ABSTRACT

In this analysis of the function of gaze and voice in Derek Walcott’s presentation of madness in *Dream on Monkey Mountain*, my starting point is Walcott’s questioning of the validity of Négritude in the Caribbean, where several cultures from Europe, Africa, and Asia are shared and uniquely cross-fertilized. Focusing on the gaze and the voice Makak encounters during the mad-journey, the essay explores how his repressed self-image returns to him through these two encounters. By examining Makak’s self-awareness as an Afro-Caribbean person, it shows that the color green, associated with the word negre, illuminates his Caribbean subjectivity. The essay ultimately argues that Makak is an emblematic character for Walcott’s reappraisal of the Caribbean hybrid creolized subjectivity that racial purists can never attain.

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Dream on Monkey Mountain, written against the backdrop of the anti-colonial movement of Négritude in the 1950s and 1960s, exemplifies Derek Walcott's poetic outlook upon the cultural uniqueness of the Caribbean and the New World in general. The Négritude movement, pioneered by African and Caribbean intellectuals such as Aimé Césaire, Léopold Senghor, and Léon-Gontran Damas in the 1930s, champions a racial consciousness among the African diaspora by resisting the negative image of Africanness forged by the European world. Claiming their Africanness in a credo of self-affirmation, the proponents of Négritude aim at the racial, cultural, psychological, and political liberation of Africans from the suffering, subjugation, and injustice inflicted on them since the colonial period. In his 1964 essay titled "Necessity of Negritude," Walcott acknowledges that Négritude has certainly restored dignity to the African descendants; nevertheless, he also insists: "For us, whose tribal memories have died, and who have begun again in a New World, Negritude offers an assertion of pride, but not of our complete identity, since that is mixed and shared by other races" (23). For him, the Négritude romanticization of the African past and celebration of the racial essence ignores the Caribbean's unique existential situation of diversity, differences, and hybridity growing out of the interactions and clashes between cultures and races. Therefore, he does not oppose Négritude in the same ways as Jean-Paul Sartre, Donna Jones, Paulin Hountondji, Tsenay Serequeberhan, Cheikh Thiam, Abiola Irele, Marcien Towa, Stanislas Adotevi, and Wole Soyinka do.¹ Rather, his disagreement with the movement comes from his aesthetic engagements with the complex Caribbean racial and cultural realities. His approach resists the atavistic desire for linear and single roots, and resonates with the thought of Caribbean intellectuals such as Wilson Harris, Édouard Glissant, and Antonio Benítez-Rojo.

Walcott's rhizomatic poetics finds keen expression in the idea of madness in his works. In "What the Twilight says," he explains that Caribbean subjects look at themselves "with black skins and blue eyes" (9), as their Caribbean psyche is marked by differences, dividedness, crossings, being split between two worlds and traditions – Europe and Africa – as a result of the colonial encounters on Caribbean soil since 1492. Recognizing himself as "mongrel" (9), Walcott argues that the mission of Caribbean artists is to describe their unique cultural mongrelism, dialectically generated from the two conflicting value systems; an artist can do so by "making creative use of his schizophrenia, an electric fusion of the old and the new" (16). Such cultural schizophrenia, he articulates, "is permanent in all countries that have been colonial. It is a shadow, a kind of meridian, a crossing that has to be examined" (White 156). He identifies himself as "a kind of split writer: I have one tradition inside me going in one way, and another tradition going another" ("Meanings" 48). Therefore, as Edward Baugh explains in his book-length study on Walcott, "[t]he metaphor of madness or psychosis may be read as a paradigm for that preoccupation with dividedness of one kind or another, whether personal or cultural or social, which has energized so much of Caribbean literature" (Derek 87). The trope of madness or schizophrenia in Walcott's works illuminates Caribbean subjects' poignant but fertile reconciliation with their hybrid existence, which rejects the status of a pure and unified identity.

Lillian Feder states in *Madness in Literature* that "[m]adness has been a continuous theme in Western literature from its beginning to the present time" (3). Designating the artist serving as "an interpreter of the madman's apparently indecipherable 'messages'" (7), she insists:

The madman of literature is, to some extent, modeled on the actual one, but his differences from such a model are at least as important as are his resemblances to it: he is rooted in a mythical or literary tradition in which distortion is a generally accepted mode of expression; furthermore, the inherent aesthetic order by which his existence is limited also gives his madness intrinsic value and meaning. (9)

While Feder notes the distortion between the actual clinical states of insanity and the literary representations of madness, she attempts to reveal "the processes of restitution" in Western literature by following Sigmund Freud (27). The varieties of madness captured by the Western

1 See Clevis Headley's "Bergson, Senghor, and the Philosophical Foundations of Négritude," pp. 91–99.

artists, reflecting cultural assumptions of the society, indicate “the ways in which the mad distort reality in accordance with their unique psychic deprivations and requirements, yet, in so doing, create an emotional environment for the reconstruction of a self image” (27).

Despite Feder’s analysis of madness as a recovery of a self-image in the Western literary traditions, the Caribbean has been represented as an area of the deranged and uncivilized Other of Europe throughout its colonial history. As in the case of Bertha in *Jane Eyre*, madness leads Caribbean subjects to the helpless confinement and existential *cul-de-sac* rather than the reconstruction of a self-image in Western literature. As Bénédicte Ledent, Evelyn O’Callaghan, and Daria Tunca note in the introduction to *Madness in Anglophone Caribbean Literature: On the Edge*, “The Caribbean is a ‘topsy-turby’ site of difference, and difference is viewed from England as a sign of degeneracy – physical, racial, mental, and moral” (2). The colonial and imperial Othering of the Caribbean reproduced in the Western literary traditional descriptions of madness may point to the limit of the Eurocentric discourse of madness developed by Feder, insofar as it overlooks the psychological repercussions of the colonial wounds inflicted on the Caribbean.

The literary descriptions of madness created by Caribbean artists refute the Eurocentric vision and imperative to pathologize the Caribbean as essentially and negatively a site of derangement. Madness is a recurring feature in Caribbean literature; and, as recent critical studies like Valérie K. Orlando’s *Of Suffocated Hearts and Tortured Souls: Seeking Subjecthood through Madness in Francophone Women’s Writing of Africa and the Caribbean* and Kelly Baker Josephs’s *Disturbers of The Peace: Representations of Madness in Anglophone Caribbean Literature* show, it can be claimed as a distinctively Caribbean literary aesthetic. Ledent, O’Callaghan, and Tunca insist that “[t]he prevalence of the madness trope in Caribbean literature suggests a constant grappling with inherited and imposed notions of normalcy and an inherent challenge to the borders of knowledge and experience” (7). The trope of madness, often adapted by Caribbean artists to their own writing which reflects the Caribbean-specific circumstances, can be seen as a counter-poetic strategy to describe the Caribbean not as the negative and colonial Other but as a sovereign subject.

In *Disturbers of the Peace*, exploring the repetitive descriptions of madness in Anglophone Caribbean literature between 1959 and 1980, Josephs argues that Caribbean literary works like *Dream on Monkey Mountain* capture social and political issues in building a Caribbean nation: “*Dream on Monkey Mountain* is specific to the nation-building process in the Caribbean” (94). While the trope of madness in the play addresses the particular problems like class, language, and neocolonialism in the nation-building in the Caribbean, however, it should have another crucial dimension as Walcott’s aesthetic contribution to the development of the Pan-Caribbean poetics of creolization based on his thoughts about Négritude. Michael Gilkes, in his study on Harris’s early works, argues that “[t]he crisis of identity is a peculiarly Caribbean theme, amounting, at times, almost to an obsession,” and that Caribbean fictions like Harris’s should be read against “this background of racial and cultural schizophrenia – the main *leitmotif* in the Caribbean novel” (x; emphasis original). This conceptual perspective is particularly applicable to the study of Walcott’s works. Employing the trope of cultural schizophrenia, *Dream on Monkey Mountain* situates Négritude’s purist craving for racial roots within the historical, social, and cultural dynamics of the Caribbean, or what Walcott calls “a West Indian experience” (White 167).

Critics have offered various interpretations of the concept of madness in *Dream on Monkey Mountain*.² For Patrick Colm Hogan, the play explores “the various ways in which racism defines an unlivable identity for oppressed people, an identity which pushes toward madness” (45). Makak is an illustration of how the mind of the colonized is split between the ideal image of selfhood imposed by the European colonizers and the actual reflection of themselves. This dissociation leads to his madness, which “is clearly at least in part a function of this inability to link himself

2 Whereas the representations of madness in Walcott’s works have gained some attention from critics, generally, as Ledent, O’Callaghan, and Tunca demonstrate, Caribbean artists’ creative use of madness in descriptions of characters, landscapes, and emotions has been “relatively neglected in criticism, especially in the Anglophone sphere, apart from the scholarship devoted to Jean Rhys’s *Wide Sargasso Sea*” (Ledent et al. 2). My essay is a contribution not only to the discussion of the play but also to the critical discussion of madness in Caribbean literature.

to family or to culture” (47). Erskine Peters, following Sander Gilman, claims that madness in the works of Walcott means “freedom from inhibitions resulting from living under cultural, political, economic, social, and philosophical proscription” (148). Makak and his people represent Caribbean subjects who are trapped in a “historical imprisonment” (148), and his mad dream moves “toward self-examination and a reorientation of one’s worldview and action” (158). Josephs, drawing on the theories of psychologists such as Eugen Bleuler and R. D. Laing, focuses on the function of the mind between dreams and madness. “The mind becomes the connection between dreams and madness because it can envision change – in dreams; but it can also distort visions – in madness” (19). She remarks that the dialectical relationship between the revisionary potential of dreams and the destructive force of madness creates “the glue that produces a cohesive Caribbeanness within the play” (93), an aesthetic interpretation of the Caribbean world.

However, strikingly lacking in the discussions on madness in *Dream on Monkey Mountain* is any consideration of the gaze and the voice, which the protagonist Makak encounters at the critical point of his madness. Psychoanalysis has contributed to our understanding of the relation of gaze and voice to madness. It is certain that the complicit connections between psychoanalysis and colonialism are often pointed out as problematic. As Ranjana Khanna notes in *Dark Continents: Psychoanalysis and Colonialism*, psychoanalysis originated and developed as a “colonial discipline,” or “a form of analysis based in the age of colonialism and constitutive of concepts of the primitive against which the civilizing mission could establish itself” (6). In the context of Caribbean literature, Whitney Bly Edwards remarks that “psychoanalysis is, arguably, an underused critical approach in Caribbean literature” because “some literary deployments of psychoanalysis itself might be seen as privileging examinations of the universality of literature, or a Western-based model of family and individual identity” (314). However, illuminating the unmistakable dynamic resonances between such intellectual figures as Lacan, Harris, and Kamau Brathwaite, Edwards also indicates the possibilities of the application, or the creolization, of psychoanalysis in the studies of Caribbean literature: “the specific texture of Caribbean literature, a body of literature that accentuates the relevance of history, provides a strong basis from which psychoanalytic readings can be done” (322).

Slavoj Žižek explains in his article “‘I Hear You with My Eyes’; or The Invisible Master” that the thing which we lost, sacrificed, and repressed as the price of entry into the system of language and social relations called the Symbolic order – the *objet petit a*, or the innermost kernel of our being – returns to us through the gaze and the voice in the case of madness:

Lacan pointed out that the consistency of our “experience of reality” depends on the exclusion of what he calls the *objet petit a* from it: in order for us to have normal “access to reality,” something must be excluded, “primordially repressed.” In psychosis, this exclusion is undone: the object (in this case, the gaze or voice) is *included* in reality, the outcome of which, of course, is the disintegration of our “sense of reality,” the loss of reality. (Žižek 91; emphasis original)

In Makak’s madness, what he sacrificed returns to him through the gaze and the voice that he encounters. Gaze and voice disrupt his subjective narcissistic reality that has been sustained by the repressive effect of his adoration of the white European world and his atavistic nostalgia for the black African world. Out of the confrontation with the repressed comes a precious experience that enables him to reassess his selfhood in the context of the Caribbean reality.

Using the psychoanalytical set of gaze and voice as an analytical framework, I propose that madness in the play spotlights the dialectical underpinnings of the creolized Caribbean identities marked by colonial clashes between the traditions of Europe and Africa. This puts in question Négritude’s exploration and celebration of pure racial roots amid the chaotic reality of the Caribbean. Incarcerated in the jail in the opening scene, Makak speaks feebly to Corporal Lestrade: “I suffer from madness. I does see things. Spirits does talk to me. All I have is my dreams and they don’t trouble your soul” (225). This line is a proleptic anticipation of the gaze and the voice Makak will encounter in his hallucinations. Reading the script of the play as a literary text, we can see how the gaze and the voice affect Makak’s selfhood as a Caribbean subject. I shall first explore the

former part of the play and the influence of the gaze upon Makak's fictional identity as a savior. Then, turning to the latter part, I study the voice and Makak's self-deception as the king of Africa. Lastly, I focus on the epilogue and try to elucidate the sense of the freedom attained.

THE GAZE DECONSTRUCTING THE FORMATION OF THE EGO

The first part of the play shows us Makak's Quixotic journey and practice as a spiritual healer. Makak is an old peasant, who has lived all of his life alone working at his charcoal pit on Monkey Mountain without a wife or child. In addition to this solitary life, he has a curious habit – he has always been careful not to look at his own reflection.

MAKAK. Sir, I am sixty years old. I have lived all my life
like a wild beast in hiding. Without child, without wife.
People forget me like the mist on Monkey Mountain.
Is thirty years now I have look in no mirror,
Not a pool of cold water, when I must drink,
I stir my hands first, to break up my image. (226)

This habitual avoidance of his self-image not simply implies his madness but also indicates that he is in a state of anti-Narcissus in which a racial inferiority complex is nurtured and structured. This state illustrates what Africans in the Caribbean may experience in confronting discrepancies between their ego-ideal and reality (in the terminology of Lacan's mirror stage). In *Black Skin, White Masks*, Frantz Fanon states that “[i]t is commonplace in Martinique to dream of whitening oneself magically as a way of salvation” (27). Colonialism established and inserted into the structure of Caribbean society a racial hierarchy in which being white was ideal and being black undesirable. Despite the color of their skin, whiteness operates normatively in the process of identification of Africans. However, since they can never attain the ideal norm, they are automatically relegated to the place of the Other. The despair induced by this colonial Othering prompts Makak to “break up my image,” to reject his own reflection.

Moustique, the only friend and partner of Makak in the charcoal business, visits his house on the mountain and finds him lying asleep outside the house. Awakened by Moustique, Makak begins to relate the dream in which he met a white woman, who addressed him as “the direct descendant of African kings, a healer of leprosy and the Saviour of his race” (225). The imagined encounter with the white woman affects him so deeply that he quickly decides to make a journey to Africa, in line with the atavistic and nostalgic drive toward pure racial roots as sought in Négritude. Her interpellation of him as the descendant of kings, a mystic healer and savior, provides a basis for the stable subjectivity: “I see this woman singing, and my feet grow roots!” (235). Instead of receiving the self-image that could inform him of his true selfhood, he is mesmerized at the formation of subjectivity constituted by the white woman's interpellation.

Makak's madness, caused by his encounter with the white apparition, illustrates the psychopathology Sartre describes in his preface to Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth*, which Walcott quotes as an introduction to the play:

In certain psychoses, therefore, tired of being insulted day in and day out, the hallucinating individual suddenly gets it into his head to hear an angel's voice complimenting him; this doesn't stop the jeering, but at least it gives him a break. It is a means of defense and the end of their story: the personality dislocates and the patient is a case for dementia. (liii).

Nevertheless, in the case of Makak, it is not “the end of their story” but the beginning of his mad-dream journey. Reminding Makak of the other morning when he behaved madly, Moustique admonishes him: “You remember one morning I come up and from the time I break the bush, I see you by the side of the hut, trembling and talking, your eyes like you crazy” (237). Referring to Makak's eyes, Moustique advises him not to abandon himself to madness, but he turns a deaf ear to Moustique, and Moustique reluctantly agrees to accompany Makak.

On their way to Africa, Makak and Moustique chance on a group of sisters and a sick man called Josephus at Quatre Chemin crossroads. Walcott's choice of the crossroads for envisioning his rhizomatic poetics is quite suggestive in terms of the Caribbean literary tradition. According to J. Michael Dash, "one of the greatest commonplaces of the literatures of the Americas is the image of the crossroads" since they serve as "a zone of radical juxtaposition and unpredictable synthesis, where the associated processes of *mestizaje*, creolization, liminality, and so flourish" (37; emphasis original).

At the crossroads, Makak and Moustique, very hungry and in need of bread, volunteer to cure Josephus. When Makak really does so, revealing his unsuspected gift for spiritual healing, people jubilantly begin to honor him as a savior. In the mad dream, he sets himself up as a healer of leprosy as well as a savior of his race, as the white woman predicted. While Makak develops his talent as a mystic spiritualist, Moustique becomes money-oriented. Ironically, Moustique detects a materialist way of raking in money in Makak's sacred power. Makak decides to adopt the persona of the savior Makak, so as to exploit his mystic skill. By this mimicry, and to some extent owing to his own eloquence, he momentarily succeeds in mulcting money from people, but once the undertaker called Basil exposes him as nothing more than a mimic, he draws their ire. Basil has been interpreted mainly in terms of Baron Samedi, a death figure from Afro-Haitian mythology. Patrick Taylor highlights how Walcott transforms the baron into "a new creative symbol for the Caribbean as a whole": "The baron is death and life in tension, but he is also white and black in conflict. Ultimately, he is the death of the white colonial world and of the black world created in resistance to colonialism" (214). As a Caribbean creolized master of crossroads between heaven and hell, life and death, male and female, physical and spiritual, Basil is a detonator of the Manichean colonial paradigm of "either Europe or Africa."

Nevertheless, it is also significant that Walcott gives the characters names which are respectively related to nonhuman organisms: Makak to a monkey in French; Tigre to a tiger; Moustique to a mosquito; and Souris to a mouse in French. Basil can also be considered as connected with an animal. Moustique calls Josephus "a sick man with a snake bite" (253), and one woman, who was not present at the scene of Makak's healing, also remarks that "[t]he old woman husband Josephus, well, snake bite him, and they had called the priest and everything" (257). However, the peasant woman who first told Moustique of the accident befalling Josephus did not mention that a snake bit him: "A snake. He was working in the bush, and a snake ..." (245; ellipsis original). In addition to this significant eschewal of particularity, the presence of Basil in the scene suggests that Josephus could have been attacked by Basil's "basilisk gaze." This nominal association between Basil and the snake comes into focus in the stage direction that, in penetrating Moustique's disguise, Basil looks into his eyes: "[As he gets nearer, looks into his eyes] You cannot run fast enough, eh? Moustique! That is not Makak! His name is Moustique!" (269). Basil's peering into Moustique's eyes, nullifying the effect of his mimicry, causes him to die as if it were a "basilisk gaze." Basil excites the people to pierce Moustique's disguise by observing the eyes, which he says sadistically are already dead: "Look for yourselves. The tongue is fire, but *the eyes are dead*" (269; emphasis mine). The more Moustique seeks to appease them, the more their fury grows, to the point that they kill him.

Makak, looking for a theme to preach on as a savior of his oppressed race, peers into Moustique's eyes, but all Moustique sees is "a black wind blowing" (274). Then a schizophrenic fit befalls Makak, and the scene ends with his losing consciousness. Indeed, he becomes a proper illustration of what Dash calls "the madman at the crossroads" (42):

MAKAK. Open your eyes, try and open your eyes, and tell me what you see. Look,
look, then, if you dying, tell me what you see. Open them. Tell me and I will preach
that. Tell me!

MOUSTIQUE. I see ... I see ... I see a black wind blowing ... A black wind ... [*He dies*]

MAKAK. [*Forcing his eyes open*] And nothing else? Nothing? Let me look in them, let me
look, and I will keep the last picture of your eyes in mine, let me be brave and look in
a dead man eye ... [*He peers into MOUSTIQUE's gaze and what he sees there darkens
his vision. He lets out a terrible cry of emptiness*]

[*In the darkness the drums begin, and shapes, demons, spirits, a cleft-footed woman, a man with a goat's head, imps, whirl out of darkness around MAKAK, and the figure of a woman with a white face and long black hair of the mask, all singing. They take the body on a litter*] (274–5)

Walcott indicates in the stage direction that Makak witnesses not “eyes” but a “gaze.” This direction makes explicit that, despite the repeated use of the word “eyes,” what Makak peers into is Moustique’s “gaze.” We are likely to assume that Makak is the subject that tries to watch Moustique’s “eyes”; however, there is another dimension in which Makak becomes the object that is looked back at by the dead man’s “gaze.” Žižek’s clear explanation of Lacan’s concept of gaze goes:

Voice and gaze are the two objects added by Jacques Lacan to the list of Freudian ‘partial objects’ (breasts, faeces, phallus). They are objects, that is to say, they are not on the side of the looking/hearing subject but on the side of what the subject sees or hears. Let us recall the archetypal scene from Hitchcock: a heroine (Lilah in *Psycho*, Melanie in *The Birds*) is approaching a mysterious, allegedly empty house; she is looking at it, yet what makes a scene so disturbing is that we, the spectators, cannot get rid of the vague impression that the object she is looking at is somehow *returning the gaze*. The crucial point, of course, is that this gaze should not be subjectivized (91, emphasis original)

Makak seems to be the subject looking at the dead man’s eyes as a savior, but he is actually the object who is looked back at by the gaze at the moment. Moustique, already dead, is unable to watch Makak; and yet, Makak feels his eyes, from which the life has fled, returning the gaze. The psychological point of the incident lies not in Makak’s subjective despair as he looks into Moustique’s eyes but in how his position as (narcissistically self-possessed) subject is implicitly deconstructed by the dead man’s gaze.

Just as Moustique’s disguise is penetrated by Basil’s basilisk gaze, Makak’s ego-formation is revealed as fake in this incident. When he tries to peer into Moustique’s eyes for the purpose of taking in what Moustique saw, he utters: “Tell me and I will preach that. Tell me!” (274). The word “preach” resonates as a symbolic word, reinforcing his ego’s formation as a savior. However, the gaze that Moustique’s eyes return unmasks the unreality of Makak’s identity as a spiritual savior. The dead man’s gaze not only sees through Makak’s illusory identity but also includes what he excluded. When he regains consciousness after the tremendous shock, Makak begins to soliloquize: “O Moustique, you did warn me. I open my eyes and I see nothing. I see man quarreling like animals in a pit” (281).

In the critical scene at the crossroads, Makak confronts, through the gaze, an ontological representation of himself as nothing. Moustique pushes him to a recognition of this: “Which white lady? You is nothing” (237). The dead man’s gaze returns the reflection of the self-image to Makak, compelling him to witness his existence as a void.

LESTRADE AS A STRADDLER

The gaze foils Makak’s attempt to restore his pure African selfhood, bringing him back to the Caribbean reality; however, the sight of him still incarcerated suggests that this has not really freed him from the colonial past. He continues the mad dream to pursue single and pure racial roots, supported, or controlled, by Lestrade. Makak’s jailmates – Tigre and Souris – slyly urge him to use his concealed knife against Lestrade for the purpose of their prison break. He stabs Lestrade and snatches his key so that they can escape, but his attack does not kill Lestrade. Playing dead, Lestrade lets all three prisoners run away. As Moustique does in Part One, Tigre and Souris decide to accompany Makak, ascribing the absurd journey to his madness: “Let’s mix ourselves in his madness” (289). With the two new partners, Makak sets off for Africa again. After watching them exit, Lestrade rises and ostentatiously proclaims to the audience that he will recapture them.

However, when he does catch up with them, he seems suddenly seized by madness: “TIGRE. What happen to him? What he looking at?/SOURIS. I don’t know, but he look crazy...” (298). It is not until the middle of this bout of insanity that he finally acknowledges himself as a black, lamenting: “I have become what I mocked. I always was, I always was” (300). Lestrade’s remorse convinces Makak that he can forgive him and attach him to his madness: “Now he is one of us” (300).

Before this transformation, Lestrade’s status as a mulatto provided him with a sense of superiority to Africans. His cooperative complicity with the British imperial rule is quite apparent: as a military officer, he represents colonial rhetoric and attitudes, serving as an agent to bolster the power of the state and to eradicate the resistance elements which may disturb the colonial authority. His role as a willing servant of British imperialism meets Edward Said’s definition of the “bourgeois native,” who chooses to be a subservient Ariel rather than a rebel Caliban:

How does a culture seeking to become independent of imperialism imagine its own past? One choice is to do it as Ariel does, that is, as a willing servant of Prospero; Ariel does what he is told obligingly, and when he gains his freedom, he returns to his native element, a sort of bourgeois native untroubled by his collaboration with Prospero. A second choice is to do it like Caliban, aware of and accepting his mongrel past but not disabled for future development. A third choice is to be a Caliban who sheds his current servitude and physical disfigurements in the process of discovering his essential, pre-colonial self. *This* Caliban is behind the nativist and radical nationalisms that produced concepts of *négritude*, Islamic fundamentalism, Arabism, and the like. (214; emphasis original)

As a member in the governmental army, Lestrade is on the colonizer’s side, rejecting his *Négritude* consciousness. Therefore, Lestrade’s incarceration of Makak wholly depends on what he calls “Roman law”: “English, English! For we are observing the principles and precepts of Roman law, and Roman law is English law” (218–9). Imposing the foreign law upon the masses, and emulating European courts with wig and gown, Lestrade boosts the white rulers’ supremacy.

By the sudden transformation into a black servant of Makak, Lestrade outgrows his former self as a collaborator and becomes a nativist who asserts his own racially essential self; or, in Said’s sense, he transforms into a Caliban who seeks: “his essential, pre-colonial self ... behind the nativist and radical nationalisms that produced concepts of *négritude* ...”:

CORPORAL. [*Flatly, like an accustomed prayer*] All right. Too late have I loved thee, Africa of my mind, *sero te amavi*, to cite Saint Augustine who they say was black. I jeered thee because I hated half of myself, my eclipse. But now in the heart of the forest at the foot of Monkey Mountain [*The creatures withdraw*] I kiss your foot, O Monkey Mountain. [*He removes his clothes*] I return to this earth, my mother. Naked, trying very hard not to weep in the dust. I was what I am, but now I am myself. [*Rises*] Now I feel better. Now I see a new light. I sing the glories of Makak! (307)

As his name suggests, Lestrade can straddle the color line between white and black. Therefore, in spite of his previous Europeanized attitude, he easily turns into a black servant who is proud of the “Africa of my mind.”

As a mulatto straddling the two worlds of white and black, Lestrade thinks of nothing but his self-predication based on either whiteness or blackness. This Manichean framework of “black or white” in his thinking is implied in his repetitive phrases. On one hand, when he is a willing servant of the British rule, he remarks, “I got the white man work to do” (279); on the other hand, after growing into an African nativist he utters, “I have the black man work to do” (307). Such an attitude that is concerned only with the black-white dichotomy is the target of Walcott’s criticism: “Once we have lost our wish to be white, we develop a longing to become black, and those two may be different, but are still careers” (*What the Twilight* 18). For Walcott, the *Négritude* movement asserts the purity of the African ethnicity and pride in the African descendants in opposition to the European white world. Such a racially essentialist and totalitarian assertion might spoil the opportunity to celebrate the Caribbean hybrid identities and to recognize how mongrel they already are.

Pastoralists of the African revival should know that what is needed is not new names for old things, or old names for old things, but the faith of using the old names anew, so that mongrel as I am, something prickles in me when I see the word “Ashanti” as with the word “Warwickshire,” both separately intimating my grandfathers’ roots, both baptizing this neither proud nor ashamed bastard, this hybrid, this West Indian. (*What the Twilight* 9)

The hybrid and “mongrel” subjectivity is what Walcott urges Caribbean subjects to realize. He wants them to be like Said’s Caliban, “aware of and accepting his mongrel past but not disabled for future development.” Nevertheless, Lestrade participates in Makak’s atavistic journey to Africa, and his presence enhances its essentialist and purist nature that disregards the racial and cultural richness in the world of the Caribbean.

When Lestrade urges after the transformation that Makak be enthroned, this may refer to the aesthetic aim of the Négritude movement: “Now, let *splendour, barbarism*, majesty, noise, slogans, parades, drown out that truth. Plaster the walls with pictures of the leader, magnify our shadows, moon, if only for a moment. Gongs, warriors, bronzes! Statues, clap your hands you forests. Makak will be enthroned!” (307; emphasis mine). In “The Necessity of Négritude,” Walcott argues that the artists in the Négritude movement emphasize “certain modes which the Negro formerly resented ... ; rhythm, simplicity, ‘*barbarism*,’ *splendour*. It is the opposite of the integration movement” (20; emphasis mine). The coincidence in diction here indicates that the African kingdom which Lestrade wants Makak to restore may resemble the works of the Négritude artists, which Walcott sees as antithetical to “the integration movement,” the ongoing creolization in the Caribbean.

In Scene Three of Part Two, the play’s action is abruptly transferred to Africa, where Makak is now enthroned as a tribal king. In the kingdom, they conduct a trial. Lestrade declares a policy of the African kingdom: “The law of a country is the law of that country. Roman law, my friends, is not tribal law. Tribal law, in conclusion, is not Roman law. Therefore, wherever we are, let us have justice” (311). Before this transformation, Lestrade had observed the foreign law and mimicked European court procedure, but now, as a servant of the African king, he conducts the trial in accord with the tribal law. He has Basil read a list of the accused that includes Aristotle and Shakespeare. Basil proclaims that “[t]heir crime ... is, that they are indubitably, ... white” (312). It is not so much Makak the king as Lestrade the nativist who wields power in the kingdom.

As this vengeful trial indicates, Makak’s African kingdom exemplifies what Walcott perceives as problematic in ideological movements like Négritude. When Moustique accuses him of being dominated by hatred and vengeful thought against the whites, Makak insists: “My hatred is deep, black, quiet as velvet” (315). Walcott explains in the interview with *New Yorker* that “the same sins are repeated, and the cycle of violence and cruelty begins again” (“*Man of the Theatre*” 18). Makak’s independent kingdom of Africa becomes another oppressive agency: a black version of colonial rule, or rather, nothing more than an inversion of European colonialism. Walcott is bitterly critical on this point: “when you have Black political groups saying that if they were in charge there would be complete deliverance, you have to mistrust them, because that leads to ideas of revenge, which is futile” (*White* 157).

Ruling an African kingdom that is tainted with the ideas of revenge against the whites, Makak falls again into self-deception. Although he has achieved independence and founded the black kingdom, he is not at all free. As a result of his atavistic journey, he ends up as a puppet. Moustique points this out when sentenced at the trial: “Now you are really mad. Mad, old man, and *blind*... . *That is not your voice*, you are more of an ape now, a puppet” (315; emphasis mine). As a puppet of Lestrade, Makak loses his own authentic sight and voice.

“A VOICE I DO NOT KNOW”: THE DIFFERENCE IN THE REACTION TO THE VOICE

Makak’s cultural schizophrenia, however, provides him with an existential opportunity to encounter the voice, which comes to disrupt his narcissistic reality as the African king, as the gaze did in Part

One. At the moment of the transformation in which he swings from collaborationism to nativism, Lestrade seems to perceive something in his own voice: “[*He howls*] *Was that my voice? My voice. O God, I have become what I mocked. I always was, I always was*” (307; emphasis mine). However, no sooner than he has identified the voice as his own than he becomes insensitive to it, refusing to let it affect him in preference to the reclamation of his identity as black. Mladen Dolar explains that we have no power or control over the voice insofar as it disrupts our narcissistic reality: “There is, however, inside that narcissistic and auto-affective dimension of the voice, something that threatens to disrupt it ... but which one cannot master and over which one has no power or control” (14). Nevertheless, when he encounters the intractable voice, Lestrade subjectivizes it and incorporates it into a new formation of his selfhood, thereby asserting himself as black. To be transformed into an African nativist, he nullifies its influence.

Comparing Makak and Lestrade in the light of the voice, we see how the difference in their reactions to it influences their destiny. When Lestrade summons the last accused at the trial, Makak becomes disturbed because the person is the very white woman that incited him to embark on the illogical dream adventure. In a state of excitement and confusion, Makak begins a monologue:

MAKAK. Please. [*He looks at the moon, then he lifts the back of her hair*] I remember, one day, when I was younger, fifty years old, or so, I wake up, alone, and I do not know myself. I wake up, an old man that morning, with my clothes stinking of fifty years of sweat. My eye closing with gum, my two hands trembling, trembling when I open them, so, and I look in them, with all the marks like rivers, like a dead tree, and I ask myself, in a voice I do not know: Who you are, *negre*? I say to the voice and to my hands, with the black coal in the cuts, I say, your name is what – an old man without a mirror. And I went in the little rain barrel behind my hut and look down in the quiet, quiet water at my face, an old, cracked, burn-up face, with the hair turning white. And it was Makak. (317–8)

When Makak hears “a voice I do not know,” although it is clearly his own, a past bubbles up to the surface in his mind – the repressed time when he heard the strange voice and looked at his self-image reflected on the water; the indelible moment that inspired the repression of his self-image and opened the days of his life as Makak. In his reminiscence, he becomes again the object that is affected by the intractable voice, as he was in the encounter with the gaze. The recognition of the “voice I do not know” marks a considerable difference between Makak and Lestrade. Whereas Makak, under the immediate realization that the voice is not his own, listens to the words which are sent to him, Lestrade subjectivizes the voice and assumes that it is his own. This difference in their encounter with the voice plays a crucial role in Makak’s decolonial adventure. The remembered past reveals how the old man turned into Makak with his original self-image receding into repression: since that day, he has sacrificed his own self. In the dream, he again pretends to be what he is not in the African kingdom. Then, the past revives, evoking the intractable voice that deconstructs his assumed subjectivity as a king of the black tribe.

Lestrade urges Makak to behead the white woman by his idea of history as progress: “Where? Anywhere! Onward, onward. Progress. Press on... . We cannot go back. History is in motion. The law is in motion. Forward, forward” (306–7). Walcott, like Glissant, Harris, and George Lamming, is embroiled in what Baugh calls the “West Indian quarrel with history” (“*West Indian*” 60), or with such a linear bias of history. Walcott argues, “If you take the idea of time as chronological time, everything looks as if it is progressing... . What happens in the Third World in the colonial imagination is acceptance of the idea of history as a moral force. That notion is what paralyzes and leads to mimicry of action or bitter memory” (*White* 156–7). Such an idea of history as progress is linked with the ideology of revenge and hatred, as seen in Lestrade. He praises Makak as an “Inventor of history!” (311), and suggests that his beheading of the white woman will open a new chapter in the history of the African people: “I have to record this for history. For the people” (317).

However, Makak rejects the presence of the others including Lestrade and decides to confront the white apparition alone. With the narcissistic reality disrupted through the gaze and voice, Makak finally ends the long mad dream: “[*Removing his robe*] Now, O God, now I am free. [*He holds the*

cd sword in both hands and brings it down. The WOMAN is beheaded]" (320). The act of killing the white woman images liberation from the oppressive pressure of white colonials. At the same time, doffing the tribal robe holds a significance as an act of setting himself free from an obsessive reliance on blackness, given Makak's vow in Part two: "the blackness will swallow me. I will wear it like a fish wears water" (286). Synthetically, both acts seem finally to emancipate Makak from blind adherence to both the worlds of black and white.

FREEDOM AND THE COLOR GREEN

No sooner has Makak cut the white woman's head off than he awakes from the long dream. The epilogue begins with this awakening, which brings his real name back to mind. He is Felix (Latin, "happy") Hobain. The old man is not a "monkey," but a "happy" person. Lestrade orders that Makak be released from the jail, and at that time Moustique comes to him. "[*Entering with crocus bags*] You have a man here named Felix Hobain. They calling him Mak ..." (325; ellipsis original). The significant point in this release from jail is suggested in the conversation between Makak and Lestrade: "CORPORAL. Now, what is this? [*Holds up the mask*] Everybody round here have one. Why you must keep it, cut it talk to it? ... You want this? [*MAKAK shakes his head*]" (324). Makak does not need the white mask any longer, as he transcends the colonial dichotomy of black and white. To the contrary, Lestrade cannot judge anything without depending on colonial practices. It is not Makak but Lestrade who is confined to the colonial framework. So Lestrade says, "Here is a prison. Our life is a prison" (325). In the light of Makak's release from the prison, the epilogue suggests that what Makak perceives to be freedom is the liberation from his colonial adherence to the white and black world.

Makak's final monologue, which he delivers on his way to Monkey Mountain, conveys what Walcott envisions as a Caribbean aesthetics:

I have been washed from shore to shore, as a tree in the ocean. The branches of my fingers, the roots of my feet, could grip nothing, but now, God, they have found ground... . [N]ow this old hermit is going back home, back to the beginning, to the green beginning of this world. Come, Moustique, we going home. (326)

The expression that he floated "from shore to shore" is not only a metaphor of the African slaves taken away from their birthplace through slavery. Walcott explains to White: "the strength of the sea gives you an idea of time that makes history absurd... . With the sea, you can travel the horizon in any direction, you can go from left to right or from right to left... . It is not a rational line. It's a circle, and that's what you feel" (White 159). His famous idea of the sea as history resonates with Brathwaite's dialectics with Caribbean differences, or what he calls tidalectics, "the movement of the water backwards and forwards as a kind of cyclic, I suppose, motion, rather than linear" (Mackey 14). Unlike Lestrade's idea of history as progress, the trope of the sea as history privileges Caribbean historical and existential consciousness. Taken away from the ancestral ground, the African slaves are uprooted; however, floated backward and forward in the sea, they reach the Caribbean, where they can start again, as Makak feels that he has found the soil in which to set his roots deep. Not the African soil that he thought to set foot on but the marine world of the Caribbean is where he finally finds himself rooted.

The color green in Makak's description of Monkey Mountain bears a special significance. Suggestively, the voice Makak encounters in madness uses a French signifier – "negre" – not uttering the English counterpart "negro." Certainly, through the interpellation of "[w]ho you are, negre?" (318), the voice urges Makak to recognize his identity in his African origins like the Négritude movement; however, at the same time, the letters of the French word "negre" can form an anagram of "green," which goes beyond the epistemological boundaries of Négritude and serves to emblematically highlight the unconscious aspect of Makak's Caribbean creolized consciousness. The association between "negre" and "green" conveyed in the voice symbolizes the special connection between the African soil, from which Makak and his ancestors were uprooted, and the tropical nature of

the Caribbean islands where he feels finally rooted.³ The color green, not belonging to the colonial framework that divides people into the two extremes of either black or white, can signify Makak's Caribbean hybrid creolized subjectivity that racial purists can never attain.

While the color “green” is a response to the “*negre*” conveyed to him by the voice, the idea of the “beginning” counters the “nothing” – a negative misrepresentation of the Caribbean – expressed in the gaze. The image of nothingness which Makak encounters through madness evokes the particular sense of the Caribbean as a historical void that is expounded in the nihilistic theories of V. S. Naipaul and Orlando Patterson. Naipaul points to the two temporalities which he has been aware of since childhood: “I grew up with two ideas of history, almost two ideas of time” (46). One is the “history with dates,” flowing from ancient Rome through nineteenth-century England to the nationalist movement in India and “affect[ing] people and places abroad”; the other is the history with “no dates,” or what he calls “undated time, historical darkness” (46). He suggests that, while the “history with dates” has always been evolving around the world, Caribbean subjects including himself are destined to exist in the “undated time, historical darkness.” Similarly, Patterson believes that Caribbean people exist bereft of ancestors because they went through the ethnic and cultural deracination by colonialism; hence his nihilistic statement that “[t]o be a West Indian is to live in a state of utter pastlessness” (258).

However, Walcott believes that the nothingness is the reservoir of creation – a *creatio ex nihilo* rather than a *cul-de-sac*. Hence his words in *Another Life*: “they will absolve us, perhaps, if we begin again,/from what we have always known, nothing” (*Poetry* 186). Thus, contesting the status of historical nothingness ascribed to Caribbean subjects by Naipaul and Patterson, he embraces the Caribbean as a new Eden. In an essay “The Caribbean: Culture or Mimicry?” he argues that “cultures can only be created out of this knowledge of nothing, and in deeper than the superficial, existential sense, we in the Caribbean know all about nothing” (12). For him, nothingness and creation are interrelated; and it is from their intersection that the Caribbean emerges. As he claims: “It is out of this that the New World, or the Third World, should begin” (13).

Returning to the “green beginning,” Makak is an emblem of Walcott's Adamic poetics, which privileges the hybrid culture of the Caribbean and questions the validity of Négritude in the Caribbean. He remarks that in the multiracial society of the Caribbean, “we have the beginnings of a great and unique society. The problem is to recognize our African origins but not to romanticize them” (“*Man of the Theatre*” 18). Rather than romanticizing, Walcott believes that Caribbean subjects need to recognize their African past as part of their multiracial/multicultural identities. Makak does not jettison his African past as a “*negre*,” but embraces it, and at the same time he realizes that he belongs to the “green” nature of the Caribbean. The final destination for which Makak as a hermit leaves is Monkey Mountain; he does not go anywhere. Walcott explains, “What he does is he sheds an image of himself that has been degraded. When he thought he was white, he did what the white man did. When he thought he was Black, he did what he thought the Black man should do. Both errors” (*White* 168). Monkey Mountain turns out to be the beginning.

At last, Makak is going back to freedom: “men can look up ... and say, ‘Makak lives there. Makak lives where he has always lived, in the dream of his people’” (326; ellipsis mine). He regains his real name Felix Hobain, but he also decides to stay as Makak living on Monkey Mountain. For Walcott, a monkey is a symbol of creativity and resistance rather than imitation and mimicry, subverting the European scientific and racial hierarchy of whites as humans sitting on the top with the other nonwhite races below mimicking their civilizations.

[I]n the imitation of apes there is something more ancient than the first human effort. The absurdity of pursuing the anthropological idea of mimicry then, if we are to believe science, would lead us to the image of the first ape applauding the gestures of what we must call the first man. Here the contention crumbles because there is no scientific

3 As a painter, Walcott seems to recognize the color green as representing the Caribbean: “One other thing that astonishes and exasperates painters from the north is that what they see in front of them is a lot of green, basic hues of green, green and red. I remember I was going out to do some painting, and there was a German tourist in a small hotel where I was staying. He said he couldn't paint there because it was too *green*” (*Montenegro* 137, emphasis original).

distinction possible between the last ape and the first man, there is no memory or history of the moment when man stopped imitating the ape, his ancestor, and became human. Therefore, everything is mere repetition... . We cannot focus on a single ancestor, that moment of ape to man if you wish, or its reverse, depending on what side of the mirror you are favoring, when the black felt that he had crossed the meridian, when the East Indian had, or the Portugese [sic], or the Chinese, or the Old World Jew. (“The Caribbean” 7–8)

Whether white or black, no race can claim its ancestral beginnings, as Walcott’s image of the monkey symbolizes. Makak is not only a happy man but also divests his nickname of its negative colonial connotations like mimicry, falsity, and Otherness. He stays on Monkey Mountain, as a mythical figure envisioning the possibilities of collective humanist liberation from the burden of the colonial past through the gaze and voice in the culturally schizophrenic minds, or the mad dreams, of “his people,” namely Caribbean subjects.

Increasingly, critics have begun to claim the trope of madness as a key theme in Caribbean literature. As Josephs notes, madness “represent[s] a Caribbean in the process of decolonization” in the age of the nation-building (21). While recognizing its specificity to the nation-building process in the Caribbean, the article illuminated the trope of madness in *Dream on Monkey Mountain* as Walcott’s contribution to the Pan-Caribbean poetics of creolization along with his criticism of the Négritude movement. It also showed the possibilities of the application of psychoanalysis, despite its origin as the “colonial discipline,” to the studies of madness in Caribbean literature by modifying and creolizing it to the Caribbean-specific psychological landscape and lived experience described by Walcott. Makak’s atavistic return to Africa, instigated by the white apparition and controlled by Lestrade the nativist, reflects Walcott’s thoughts about the Négritude movement, insofar as Walcott believes that “a return is impossible, for we cannot return to what we have never been. The truth in all this is, of course, the amnesia of the American, particularly of the African” (“The Caribbean” 7). However, the nothingness and color green, which we observed in the gaze and voice Makak encounters in madness, symbolizes Walcott’s aesthetic appraisal of the unique Caribbean cross-fertilized aesthetic traditions. As Edwards says, psychoanalysis may be still “an underused critical approach” in Caribbean literature; however, it can offer the space in which fruitful readings of Caribbean literary works may occur. Especially, as this article showed, psychoanalytic approaches to the representations of madness in Caribbean literature can help us shed new light on the poetics of creolization, for example, in Erna Brodber’s novels like *Jane and Louisa Will Soon Come Home* and Earl Lovelace’s *Salt*, and more recent works like *The Same Earth* and *The Last Warner Woman* by Kei Miller, and *Madwoman* by Shara McCallum.

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The author has no competing interests to declare.

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